

REMARKS

I. Introduction

With the cancellation of claim 1, claims 2 to 29 are pending and being considered. It is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claim 27 includes allowable subject matter. In this regard, the Examiner will note that claim 27 has been rewritten herein to be in independent form and to include all of the features of its base claim 1.

The Examiner will further note that each of claims 2 to 8, 11, 17 to 22, and 28 has been amended herein without prejudice so that claims 2 to 22, 28, and 29 depend from claim 27. The Examiner will further note that each of independent claims 23 and 25 (from which claims 24 and 26 respectively depend) has been amended herein without prejudice to include subject matter analogous to that of claim 27.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 2 to 29 are in condition for immediate allowance.¹

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The remaining rejected claim 1 has been canceled herein without prejudice, thereby rendering moot the claim rejections.

IV. Subject Matter of Claims as Previously Presented

Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the claims as previously presented in a continuation patent application. Further, any disclaimer that may have occurred during the prosecution of this application is expressly rescinded as regards any subsequently filed patent application.

¹ The Office Action states that “claim 27 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office Action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” Office Action, p. 12. However, this statement is believed to have been made partly in error since the Office Action does not set forth any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claim 27 is therefore believed to be in condition for immediate allowance.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that pending claims 2 to 29 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections (and any objections) be withdrawn. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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